

**MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNSELOR (GRADES K-8)**

I. PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS:

The elementary school counselor, initial student services certificate, valid for a period of four (4) years from the effective date on the certificate, will be issued to those persons meeting the following requirements:

A. Recommendation for certification from the designated official of a college or university approved to train elementary school counselors by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education; and

B. The applicant must possess either:

1. Completion of a master's degree with a major emphasis in guidance and counseling from a college or university meeting approval of the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education based upon the completion of a planned program of at least twenty-four (24) semester hours of approved graduate credit in courses in guidance and counseling with at least twelve (12) semester hours focused upon guidance in the elementary schools:

a. Complete one (1) course in each of the following areas:

- 1)** Orientation to the Personal and Professional Development in Counseling;
- 2)** Foundation of Elementary and Secondary School Guidance;
- 3)** Theories and Techniques of Elementary and Secondary School Counseling;
- 4)** Analysis of the Elementary School Child and School Learning Problems;
- 5)** Theories and Techniques of Group Counseling; or
- 6)** Practicum in Counseling;

b. Supervised Practice in an Elementary School Guidance Program for at least three (3) semester hours; and

c. Knowledge and/or competency in each of the following areas:

- 1)** Theories of human development;
- 2)** Theories of learning;
- 3)** Theories of personality;
- 4)** Theories of career development;
- 5)** Assessment materials and techniques;
- 6)** Analysis of school adjustment and classroom climate;
- 7)** Utilization of information services and community resources;
- 8)** Research methods and statistics;
- 9)** Consulting with parents and staff;
- 10)** Development of positive mental health in the school environment;
- 11)** Process of staffing with other professionals to develop instruction strategies;
- 12)** Program development including needs assessment, implementation, evaluation;
- 13)** Time management with attention to priority setting for goals and objectives; or
- 14)** Professional organization and ethical standards;

OR

2. A master's degree or higher degree in education, school counseling, counseling, counseling psychology, or a closely related mental health discipline; and additional graduate course work specific to school counseling, as designated by the state-approved recommending certification official, including a supervised internship or field experience of at least three hundred (300) hours in an appropriate school setting; and

C. The applicant must either:

1. Possess a bachelor's degree in education from a state-approved teacher preparation program;

OR

2. Complete a curriculum in teaching methods and practices, classroom management and the psychology of the exceptional child, as specified by the recommending certification officer of a state-approved program; and

D. Must achieve a score equal to or greater than the Missouri qualifying score on the assessment designated by the State Board of Education, not to include the principles of learning and teaching.

II. CAREER CONTINUOUS STUDENT SERVICES CERTIFICATE

A. The elementary school counselor, career continuous student services certificate will be issued upon completion and verification of the following:

1. Four (4) years of state-approved school counseling experience;
2. Participation in two (2) years of district-provided mentoring (during the first two (2) years of student services experience);
3. The development, implementation and completion of a professional development plan of at least forty (40) contact hours of professional development, or three (3) semester hours of graduate credit toward an advanced degree; and
4. Successful participation in an annual performance-based evaluation.

B. The elementary school counselor, career continuous student services certificate will remain valid upon verification of the following:

1. Participation in a performance-based system of evaluation; and
2. Participation in twenty (20) contact hours of professional development annually.

C. The elementary school counselor, career continuous student services certificate holder is exempt from additional professional development if the holder has a local professional development plan in place with the school and meets at least two (2) of the following:

1. Ten (10) years of state-approved school counselor experience;
2. An educational specialist's degree in school counseling; and/or
3. Certification from a board-approved nationally recognized professional school counselor organization.